

1. Most of failures of government schemes are attributed to the "failure of implementation" while having overtones of "bureaucratic scapegoating"; which can have a demoralizing effect but the policy formulation is equally responsible for it. Comment. (250 words)

Answer:

- Implementation is the process of turning policy into practice. However, it is common to observe a 'gap' between what was planned and what actually occurred as a result of a policy.
- Following are major challenges in implementation:
 - a) Lack of clear and logically consistent objectives.
 - b) Inadequate causal theory - to how particular actions would lead to desired outcomes.
 - c) Lack of an implementation process structured to enhance compliance by implementers (incentives and sanctions).
 - d) Lack of committed, skilful implementing workforce.
 - e) Lack of support from interest groups and legislature.
 - f) No changes in socio-economic conditions that undermine political support or the causal theory underlying the policy.
 - g) Lack of adequate time and insufficient resources availability.
 - h) Lack good coordination and communication among various agencies.
 - i) Widespread corruption.
- It is not that policy implementation is the major culprit in poor performance of various schemes; policy-making itself has various flaws such as:
 - a) One of the main problems with policy-making in India, is extreme fragmentation in the structure. For example, the transport sector is dealt by five departments/Ministries in the government of India whereas in the US and UK it is a part of one department (Department of Transport and Public Works in the US and Department of Environment, Transport and Regions in the UK). Similar examples exist in the energy, industry and social welfare sectors as well. Such fragmentation fails to recognize that actions taken in one sector have serious implications on another and may work at cross purposes with the policies of the other sector. Besides, it becomes very difficult, even for closely related sectors, to align their policies in accordance with a common overall agenda.
 - b) Another problem is the excessive overlapping between implementation, program formulation and policy making which creates a tendency to focus on operational convenience rather than on public needs. Policy-making in Indian ministries occurs at the levels of Director and above, but the most important level (crucial for consideration of cross-cutting impacts) is that of the Secretaries to the Government of India, who are their Ministers' "policy advisers-in-chief". However the very same Secretaries spend a large part of their time bogged down on routine day-to-day administration of existing policy.

- c) Time is spent anticipating and answering parliamentary questions, attending meetings and functions on implementation issues etc. Partly the problem is symptomatic of overcentralisation— excessive concentration of implementation powers at the higher levels of the ministries. Partly, it is also due to such officers being more comfortable with implementation matters than with policy making. The result is that sub-optimal policies, where adequate attention has not been paid to citizen needs, tend to emerge.
- d) Often public policy is made without adequate input from outside government and without adequate debate on the issues involved. The best expertise in many sectors lies outside the Government. Yet the policy processes and structures of Government have no systematic means for obtaining outside inputs, for involving those affected by policies or for debating alternatives and their impacts on different groups.

PRACTICE QUESTIONS

Answer the following Questions

1. India's China policy is inadequate and suffers from the baggage of history. Analyze and discuss the changes required in our China policy. (250 words)
2. Zoonotic diseases will prove to be a big health risk going forward and India must gear itself to deal with this challenge. Examine (250 words)